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to look through two spectacle glasses, separated by a suitable distance from each other, found that distant objects appeared larger and more distinct. It appears to have been some time before the importance of the discovery was appreciated; and the instrument was set up in the optician's shop as a curious philosophical toy, showing a large and inverted image of a weathercock, towards which it was directed. The rumour reached Galileo (in Venice at the time) that an instrument had been invented by which distant objects could be made to seem nearer than their true distance. He immediately set himself to consider the means by which such a result could be brought about, and his investigations were rewarded by the discovery of a telescope, of a different construction, however, from that which had been used in Holland. The interest excited by the discovery was unbounded. For more than a month Galileo's whole time was taken up in exhibiting his instrument to the principal inhabitants of Venice; and for some time after, the fortunate possessor of a telescope found it vain to hope to use his wonderful instrument without molestation. A crowd of idlers would gather round him, insist on taking possession of the telescope, hand it from one to the other, and detain him for some hours until their curiosity was satisfied.

Galileo's first application of his instrument to the heavenly bodies was the study of the beautiful appearance presented by the varied surface of the moon. He next turned his attention to the planet Jupiter. The first evening he observed it he took notice of three small stars which seemed nearly in a line with the planet, and whose position he took notice of, since the manner in which the motion of the planets is studied is by comparing their position with that of the neighbouring fixed stars. The next night he looked again, and found that Jupiter had passed to the east of two of them, which had been on the other side of the planet the night before. But here was a puzzle. Jupiter, according to the tables, ought, at this time, to be going towards the west, and not towards the east. How was this to be accounted for? When next he was able to observe them, he found them in a new position, and a fourth small star had made its appearance. Night after night these small stars continued close to Jupiter, in varying positions, however Jupiter changed his place among the fixed stars. The conclusion could not be resisted that the movement which he first supposed had been made by Jupiter had, in reality, been made by these stars, and that they could be nothing less than four moons revolving about Jupiter, in the same manner in which the earth is accompanied by its single attendant.

This single discovery put the controversy concerning the true system of the universe in quite a new position. The old theory was that stars and planets all went round the earth. Here were clear exceptions, as these four newly discovered stars unquestionably made their revolutions, not round the earth, but round Jupiter. The sight of this planet, attended by its four satellites, was alone sufficient to shake the confidence of astronomers in their belief that the earth was the most important body in the universe; while the spectacle of these bodies performing, in perfect order, their revolutions round one central body could not but suggest an analogy revealing the true relation of the planets to the sun.

When Galileo first announced to the world his discovery of these four new planets, it is difficult to describe the sensation which its publication produced. Many doubted, many positively refused to believe so novel an announcement; all were struck with the greatest astonishment (according to their respective opinions), either at the new view of the universe thus offered to them, or at the daring audacity of Galileo in inventing such fables.

The sensation caused by the news may be illustrated by an extract from a letter of Kepler, illustrative for his own astronomical discoveries:—"I was sitting idle at home, thinking of you, most excellent Galileo, and your letters, when the news was brought to me of the discovery of four new planets by the help of the double eye-glass. Wachenfels stopped his carriage at my door to tell me, when such a fit of wonder seized me at a report which seemed so very absurd, and I was thrown into such agitation at seeing an old dispute between us decided in this way, that between his joy, my colouring, and the laughter of both, confounded as we were by such a novelty, we were hardly capable, he of speaking, or I of listening."

One reason why the report seemed so very absurd was, that many at that time had persuaded themselves not merely that there were only seven planets (including the sun and moon), but that there neither could nor ought to be any more. A Florentine astronomer writes, that since animals have seven apertures in the head (namely, two nostrils, two eyes, two ears, and a mouth), since there are only seven metals, seven days in the week, and so forth, there could not possibly be more than seven planets. Galileo quietly replied, that these might have been good reasons for believing, beforehand, that no more planets could be discovered; but that they were hardly of sufficient weight to destroy the new ones when they had been actually seen.

Another astronomer writes about Galileo's pretended discovery.—

"These are the dreams of idle men, who love ludicrous ideas better than our laborious and industrious correction

of the heavens. Nature abhors so horrible a chaos; and to the truly wise such vanity is detestable."

Others refused to believe in the new planets until Galileo could show what astrological influence they had on the fortunes and characters of individuals. Galileo sarcastically advised them to compare all their past predictions with the events. If they found perfect agreement, then they might prophesy merrily on, for the new planets could not, in any degree, affect the things which were already past, and they might hope to be no less fortunate conjurers in future; but if they found the events to differ, in some trifling particulars, from their predictions, then they might attribute the difference, if they pleased, to those new planets, and might set to work to form tables, and ascertain, by observation, the variety of influences depending on them.

The principal professor of Padua pertinaciously refused all Galileo's invitations to look at the heavens through his glass, and a German named Horky published a book strenuously denying the existence of the new planets, and asserting positively that he had himself looked at the heavens through Galileo's glass, and knew for a certainty that no such thing as a satellite of Jupiter exists. The conclusion of the story is amusing. Kepler, with whom this work was intended to find favour, received its author with a burst of indignation, and did not receive him back into his good graces, except on the condition "that I [Kepler] am to show him Jupiter's satellites, and he is to see them, and own that they are there."

At length, when the existence of these new satellites could be no longer denied, quite an opposite complaint was made, that Galileo had understated their number. One astronomer counted five, another nine, while others carried the number up to twelve. But a short time proved that it was as unsafe to exceed as to fall short of the number that Galileo had fixed on; for Jupiter rapidly removed himself from the neighbourhood of the fixed stars, which had given rise to these pretended discoveries, carrying with him none but his four original attendants.

Galileo went on to make other interesting discoveries on the other planets. The only one which we shall delay to record here is his discovery of the phases of Venus. When the theory was first put forward that the planets are opaque bodies, which only shine by the reflected light of the sun, it was objected that if this were the case Venus ought to present the same phases as the moon, changing from full face to a crescent, according as it approached or receded from the sun. Copernicus made a very unsuccessful attempt to explain this difficulty, but Galileo, on directing his telescope to Venus, found that she actually did go through these changes, the non-observance of which by the naked eye had been considered a fatal objection to the Copernican system.

It does not seem a difficult matter for Galileo merely to report the result of his observations on the heavens; but it is hard to estimate properly the amount of courage which was required to do so at the time. Galileo had to face a powerful party, which, when invited to look on an object in the heavens which Aristotle had never suspected, immediately refused all credence to those senses to which at other times they so confidently appealed. Plagiarist! liar! impostor! heretic! were the malignant exclamations by which the poor philosopher was unsparingly assailed. In one of his letters he expresses strongly the hopelessness of convincing people who were resolved not to be convinced. "You almost make me laugh by saying that those clear observations are sufficient to convince the most obstinate. It seems that you have yet to learn that, long ago, the observations were capable of convincing those who were capable of reasoning, and those who wish to learn the truth; but that to convince the obstinate, and those who care for nothing beyond the vain applause of the stupid and senseless vulgar, not even the testimony of the stars could suffice, were they to descend on earth to speak for themselves. Let us, then, endeavour to procure some knowledge for ourselves, and rest contented with this sole satisfaction; but of advancing in popular opinion, or gaining the assent of the book philosophers, let us abandon both the hope and the desire."

With this quotation we conclude for the present our account of Galileo's discoveries, which we found could not conveniently be compressed within the limits of a single article.

(To be continued.)

#### AURICULAR CONFESSION.

In our numbers for July and August last we showed that the form of absolution, "Ego absolvo te," was never used in the Church of Rome itself until the thirteenth century.

Our clever correspondent, Mr. Rourke, has written to us a letter upon these articles (which we published in our last number), but he has not attempted to deny or to question the great fact; and we think no intelligent Roman Catholic will now attempt to deny it.

Our readers will, probably, like to know what was the doctrine and practice of the Church of Rome about "confession" during those ages when the priests of the Church of Rome were not yet permitted to forgive sin, but only to pray to God that He would forgive it. We, therefore, now proceed to show what was the doctrine and practice of the Church of Rome about confession and contrition, previous to the thirteenth century.

We will first show the doctrine of confession as settled by the Council of Trent, to suit the form, "Ego absolvo te."

"The holy synod moreover teaches that the form of the sacrament of penance, in which chiefly its force is situated, is placed in those words of the minister, 'I absolve thee.' . . . But the matter, as it were, of this sacrament, is the acts of the penitent himself—to wit, contrition, confession, and satisfaction, which things in the penitent, inasmuch as they are required by the institution of God, for the integrity of the sacrament and the full and perfect remission of sins, for this reason they are called parts of penance."

With respect to the great question whether sins can be forgiven by God upon contrition only, without confession, the Council of Trent says: "Although it may happen that this contrition be sometimes perfected by charity, and reconcile a man to God, before this sacrament be actually received, nevertheless that reconciliation is not to be ascribed to that contrition, without the desire for the sacrament, which is included in it."

And the general question is thus summed up by the Council: "It is necessary to seek from God the pardon even of all sins, by open and modest confession."

We now proceed to show what the doctrine of the Church of Rome about the necessity of confession was, in the twelfth century, before priests had undertaken to say, "I absolve thee."

For this purpose we are fortunate in having a treatise on penance, written in the twelfth century (about A.D. 1151) by a Benedictine monk, Gratian, the famous author of the Decretum, a book which at once became the standard of ecclesiastical law in all Western Europe.

We have often had to complain of the "Decretum" for the forgeries and the novelties it adopted, and also to praise it for the good old doctrine and maxims which it retained from the early ages.

Gratian's treatise on penance is superior to anything else he wrote, alike in its arrangement and in force of expression, and comprehension of the subject.

Gratian probably wrote this treatise before he published the Decretum; he then inserted the treatise in the Decretum, in which it forms the answer to the third "question" under Cause xxxiii.

This treatise thus formed part of that book which at once became the standard of canon law in the Church of Rome. No higher authority could be found to show what was then the doctrine of the Church of Rome about confession.

Gratian takes the same prudent course in this treatise which he takes in a great many other questions. He found the Church of Rome not having any law which required confession to a priest as necessary. He found one large party in the Church maintaining that confession was wholly unnecessary to the forgiveness of sin. He found another large party maintaining that confession was necessary in order to obtain forgiveness of sin: the Church of Rome not thinking it necessary, or else not thinking it safe, to decide between them, and, therefore, allowing each party to support their own opinion, just as the Church of Rome did afterwards about the Immaculate Conception. In this case, Gratian had more prudence than to express any opinion of his own in the treatise. He states the opinions of each party, and also the authorities and arguments by which those opinions were maintained. This he does with an ability and clearness greatly superior to the rest of his work; he then leaves the question to the judgment of the reader, giving no opinion of his own, and thus confessing that the Church of Rome had then no judgment formed in the matter.

On this treatise, thus inserted in the canon law, the matter seems to have rested for sixty-four years, until confession was at last enforced by the third Council of Lateran, A.D. 1215.

Gratian gives first the authorities and arguments of that great party in the Church of Rome who then thought themselves at liberty (as they really were) to hold in the Church of Rome herself that confession to a priest was wholly unnecessary for the forgiveness of sin. We will try and give an abstract of his statement of their argument. It is contained in the first part of the treatise on penance, called "Distinction I."

Gratian thus states the question:—"Whether by contrition of heart alone, and secret satisfaction, without confession of the mouth, any one can satisfy God. For there are those who say that any one whosoever may obtain pardon of crime without confession made to the Church, and without the judgment of the priest, according to that of Ambrose upon Luke, at chapter 23.

#### Chapter 1.

"Peter grieved and wept, because he erred, like a man.

\* Debet præstare Sacra Synodus, sacramenti Penitentiae formam, in qua præcipue iudicium sita est, in illis ministris verbis positum esse. Ego te absolvo, &c. Sunt autem quasi materia huius sacramenti ipsius penitentis actus, nempe contritio, confessio, et satisfactio. Quæ quæritur in penitente ad integritatem sacramenti, ad plenitudinem et perfectam peccatorum remissionem, ad Dei institutionem requiruntur hæc ratione Penitentia partis dicuntur.—Council of Trent, Session xiv., c. 3.

\* Est contritio hanc aliquid charitate perfectam esse contritionem, hominemque hoc reconciliari, præquam hoc sacramentum, cum suscipiatur; ipsam nihilominus reconciliationem ipsi contritio, sine sacramenti voto, quod in illa includitur, non esse adhibendam.—Council of Trent, Session xiv., c. 4.

\* Necesse est, omnium etiam venientium, cum aperte et veraciter confessionem, a Deo quaerant.—Council of Trent, Session xiv., c. 5.

\* Tractatus de Penitentia. Decret. Caus. xxxiii., qu. 2.

I do not find what he said: I find that he wept. I read of tears. I do not read of satisfaction.

#### Chapter 2, also;

"Tears wash out a sin, which it is a shame to confess with the voice."

#### Chapter 3, also the Prophet (Psalm 51, v. 19).

"The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit; a contrite and humbled heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."

#### Chapter 4, also (Psalm 32, v. 5).

"I said, I will confess against myself my unrighteousness to the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin."

Which Augustine explaining, says:

#### Chapter 5.

"Great is the goodness of God, that He should have forgiven sins on a promise alone. He does not yet pronounce with his mouth, and yet God already hears in his heart, because that he was saying [in his heart] was as it were to pronounce something. For the wish is reckoned for the work."

Gratian then gives a variety of passages from the Roman civil law, to show how the attempt to commit a crime was punished by that law, even where the crime was not committed (chapters 6 to 21); and passages from the Fathers supporting the same principle (chapters 22 to 30).

The object of these chapters is evidently to show that the intention of the mind is to be regarded in acquitting or condemning, rather than the outward act.

Gratian goes on to represent how that party in the Church argued from these authorities:—"It appears more clear than light that sins are remitted by contrition of the heart, not by confession of the mouth."

Gratian then gives two passages (chapters 31 and 32) from Prosper, as he says, but really from Julianus Pomerius, the substance of which is, that by judging ourselves we may obtain pardon, without the knowledge of any other person.

Gratian proceeds thus with the argument of those who hold this opinion:—

"This also is proved by that authority of the prophet (Ezekiel, ch. 33): 'In whatever hour the sinner shall have been converted and groaned, &c.' for it is not said, 'shall have confessed with his mouth,' but only, 'shall be converted and groan, he shall live in life; he shall not die.'"

Gratian proceeds with the argument:—

"Hence, also, the prophet says:—

#### Chapter 33.

"Render your hearts, and not your garments' (Joel, ch. 2, 13).

"Showing that sins are remitted in contrition of the heart, which is understood in the rending of it, and not in confession of the mouth, which is part of outward satisfaction, which is called the rending of garments, understanding the whole by a part."

"Hence, also, by the same prophet, the Lord says:—

#### Chapter 34.

"Be turned to me with your whole heart, and I will be turned to you.' For conversion is called as it were a turning of the heart from every side. But if our heart is turned on every side from evil to God, straight it obtains the fruit of its conversion, that God being turned from His anger to mercy, should grant the pardon of sin, for which He was at first preparing vengeance. Whence it is given to be understood that even while the mouth is silent we can obtain pardon. Hence even those lepers whom the Lord commanded that they should show themselves to the priests were cleansed in the way, before they came to the priests. From which fact, doubtless, it is given to be understood that before we show our faces to the priests, that is, confess our sins, we are cleansed from the leprosy of sin."

Hence, also, that the Lord might show that the sinner is cleansed, not by the judgment of the priest, but by the bounty of Divine Grace. He healed the leper by touching him, and afterwards commanded him to offer to the priest the sacrifice of the law. For the leper is touched when the mind of the sinner, enlightened by being looked on by divine goodness, is pricked. Whence, Peter, after his third denial, the Lord looking on him, poured forth bitter tears, by which He washed out

Utrum sola cordis contritione et secreta satisfactione, absque oris confessione quique possit Deo satisfacere, redeamus. Sunt enim qui dicunt, quilibet criminalis veniam sine confessione facta ecclesie et sacerdoti iudicio posse promereri, juxta illud Ambrosii super Lucam, ad cap. 22.

#### Cap. 1.

Petrus doluit et fleuit, quia erravit, ut homo. Non invenio quid dixerit; invenio quod fleverit. Lacrimas ejus lego, satisfactionem non lego.

#### c. 2. Item.

Lacrimae lavant delictum, quod voce pudor est confiteri.

#### c. 3. Item. Propheta.

Sacrificium Deo spiritus contribulatus; cor contritum et humillimum, Deus, non despicies.

#### c. 4. Item.

Dixi, confitebor adversum me in iniquitatem meam Domino, et tu remisisti impietatem peccati mei.

#### Cap. 5.

Magna pietas Dei, ut ad solam promissionem peccata dimiserit. Nondum pronuntiat ore, et tamen Deus jam audit in corde, quia ipsum dicere quasi quoddam pronuntiare est. Votum enim pro opere reputatur. — De decret. Caus. xxxiii., qu. 3, Dist. 1.

Luce clarius constat cordis contritione, non oris confessione, peccata dimitti.

Gratian is very often incorrect in giving the names of the authors. Hoc idem probatur auctoritate illa prophetica: "In quacunque hora peccator fuerit conversus, et iugum meruit, &c." Non enim dicitur, ore confessus fuerit, sed tantum, conversus fuerit et iugum meruit, vita vivet, et non morietur. — C. 32, latter end.

the sin of his denial. The leper shows himself to the priest when the penitent confesses his sin to the priest. He offers the sacrifice of the law, when he executes in fact the satisfaction imposed on him by the judgment of the Church. But he is cleansed before he can come to the priest, when the pardon of sin is granted through contrition of heart, before confession of the mouth.

We regret to have to leave out any of this interesting argument, but our space will not admit the whole.

It goes on to argue (ch. 35), from the teaching of St. Augustine about the commencement of the work of grace, and concludes—"Since, therefore, as has been proved, we are raised up by grace, and made the children of light, before confession, it evidently appears that sin is remitted by contrition of the heart alone, without confession of the mouth" (ch. 36).

The argument then proceeds upon I. John, 3, 9:—"Whosoever loveth not, abideth in death." Either the person confessing loves, and is passed already from death to life, or he does not love, and remains in death in spite of his confession.

The whole argument is wound up thus:—"Sin, which is proved to have been remitted before, is, therefore, not remitted in confession. Confession is, therefore, made to show repentance, not to obtain pardon; and as circumcision was given to Abraham for a sign of righteousness, and not for a cause of justification, so confession to the priest is offered as a sign of pardon received, not as a cause of remission to be received" (ch. 37).

Gratian then proceeds to the argument on the opposite side (chapters 38 to 87):—"Others, on the contrary, testify, saying, that no one can be cleansed from sin without confession of the mouth and satisfaction of work, if he has time for satisfaction" (ch. 37, part 2).

Gratian gives this argument with equal fairness, but space does not allow us to follow it. We can only say that many of its authorities which seem most to the purpose are not genuine; that many prove little to the point; and none suppose the priest to say "I absolve thee," but only that "the priest approaches as a petitioner for the sins of the penitents" (ch. 61).

At chapter 87 Gratian introduces the first party, in reply, asserting that some of the authorities produced by the advocates of confession, Chrysostom and Prosper for instance, were plainly perverted (which, indeed, cannot be denied); and that others were not to the point. The following comment on a passage from St. Augustine quoted by the other party to prove confession necessary is a good specimen:—"No one is affirmed to be cleansed from sin unless he has suffered punishment of sin. But it is one thing to confess sin to the priest, and to make satisfaction for sin at his judgment, and it is another thing to confess to God in the heart, and to punish sin in oneself by secret satisfaction. For penitence is, as Augustine says, grief of the heart, by which each punishes in himself what he has offended" (ch. 87, part 2).

Gratian then introduces the advocates of confession, coming in again with their reply; and a very forcible reply it seems at first sight, supported by a long quotation from St. Augustine, entirely on their side (ch. 88); but the passage, when examined, turns out not to be St. Augus-

Hinc etiam propheta ait:

#### Cap. 32.

Scindite corda vestra, et non vestimenta. Ostendens in contritione cordis, quia in ejusdem scissione intelligitur, non in confessione oris, quia pars est exterioris satisfactionis, quam scissuram vestium nominavit, a parte totum intelligens, peccata dimittit.

Hinc etiam per eundem prophetam Dominus ait:

#### Cap. 34.

Convertimini ad me in toto corde vestro, et convertar ad vos. Conversio autem dicitur quasi cordis undique versio. Si autem cor nostrum undique, a malo ad Deum vertitur, mox sine conversionis fructum meretur, ut Deus ab ira sua ad misericordiam conversus peccati prestat indulgentiam, cuius primo preparabat vindictam. Unde datur intelligi, quod etiam ore taceente veniam consequi possumus. Hinc etiam leprosi illi, quibus Dominus precepit ut ostenderent se sacerdotibus, in itinere antequam ad sacerdos venissent, mundati sunt. Ex quo facto nimirum datur intelligi quod antequam sacerdotibus ora nostra ostendamus, id est peccata nostra confiteamur a lepra peccati mundamur.

Hinc etiam ut Dominus ostenderet, quod non sacerdotali iudicio, sed largitate divine gratie peccator emundatur, leprosum tangendo mundavit, et postea sacerdoti sacrificium ex lege offerre precepit. Leprosus enim tangitur, quum respectu divine pietatis mens peccatorum illustrata compungitur. Unde post trinum negationem Petrus, Dominus eam respiciente, profudit amaras lacrimas, quibus culpam negationis sue diluit. Leprosus semetipsum sacerdoti representat, dum peccatum suum sacerdoti ponitens confitetur. Sacrificium ex lege offert dum satisfactionem ecclesie iudicio sibi imponit factis exsequitur. Sed antequam ad sacerdotem perveniat, emundatur, dum per contritionem cordis ante confessionem oris peccati veniam indulgetur.

quum ergo ante confessionem, ut probatum est, sumus reusculati per gratiam, et filii lucis facti, evidenter appareat, quod sola cordis contritione, sine confessione oris, peccatum remittitur.

Non ergo in confessione peccatum remittitur, quod jam remissum esse probatur. Hic itaque confessio ad ostensionem penitentiae, non ad imputationem venit, et sicut circumcisio data est Abraham in signum iustitiae, non in causam justificationis, sic confessio sacerdoti offertur in signum venie acceptae, non in causam remissionis acceptiendi.

Alii e contrario testantur, dicentes sine confessione oris et satisfactione operis neminem a peccato posse mundari, si tempus satisfaciendi habuerit.

Sacerdoti, qui pro delictis penitentium precator accedit.—Pope Leo I.

Nullus enim asserit ut peccato mundari, nisi peccati passus fuerit penam. Sed aliud est peccatum sacerdoti confiteri, et ejus arbitrio de peccato satisfacere; atque aliud Deo corde confiteri, et secreta satisfactione peccatum in se ipso punire. Est enim penitentia (ut ait Augustinus) dolor cordis, quo quisque in se punit quod deliquit.

time's at all. It was thus that men were deceived in that age, into adopting novel doctrines by false testimonies attributed to ancient fathers.

Having thus given the arguments on both sides with equal fairness, Gratian says:—

"We have briefly expounded by what authorities, and by what support of reasons, either opinion of satisfaction and confession can be supported. But to which of these opinions we should rather adhere is left to the judgment of the reader. For either opinion has for supporters wise and religious men" (ch. 89, at the end.)

The Decretum of Gratian was "corrected," after the time of the Council of Trent, by a Commission of Cardinals and doctors appointed by the Pope. This commission (commonly called "The Roman Correctors") has left us notes upon Gratian. To the passage last given, they have appended this note:—"To the judgment of the reader; it is most certain, and must be held for most certain, that sacramental confession of mortal sin is necessary, to be used in that manner and time which is appointed in the Council of Trent after other councils." (Note on the place.)

It is truly most certain that this was the law established by the Council of Trent, in the year 1551; and partly established before by the third Council of Lateran, in the year 1215. It is equally certain that Gratian could find no such law of the Church of Rome in the twelfth century, and, therefore, Gratian had nothing for it but to leave the question "to the judgment of the reader."

This seems to us now, as it seemed to Gratian then, a fair exercise of "private judgment;" and it proves beyond all question that in the twelfth century the Church of Rome had not yet come to any judgment in favour of the necessity of confession to a priest, in order to obtain pardon of sin.

In respect of this question, it seems that in the twelfth century one half of the Church of Rome were right good Protestants; and the other half were as yet but indifferent Romanists, having as yet no notion that the priest should say, "I absolve thee."

How many of the modern doctrines of the Church of Rome have we already proved to have had their first establishment in the Church of Rome herself after the twelfth century; we shall probably count them up in a separate article some time hereafter. We think this inquiry deserving of the serious consideration of Roman Catholics.

This instance may serve to correct an error which many Protestants fall into. It is common for Protestants to imagine that the Church of the middle ages was wholly dark, and devoid of the knowledge of the gospel of the grace of God. We think the bold and vigorous statement which Gratian gives in his treatise on penitence of the doctrines of a large portion of the Church in his day is well calculated to correct this serious error. The Church of Rome after the Council of Trent, in which all her members were bound to profess errors, is a very different thing from the Church of the twelfth century, in which men were, at least on many points, at liberty, which liberty many used, to profess the truth.

## THE CHURCH OF ITALY.

If the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome were an institution of our Lord Himself, and not, as alleged by Protestants, the tardy result of continual encroachment on the rights of other Churches, the farther back we went, the more clearly we should be able to trace the powers of that Church as undisputed and universally recognised by all others. If, on the contrary, our Lord did not institute any such supremacy, but intended each Church to mould its own constitution, subject only to the divine verities recorded in the sacred Scriptures, without being subject to any supreme local see, then we may fairly presume that if we go back behind the period of successful encroachment, we shall find other Churches acting independently of the Church of Rome, and denying her right to dictate either in points of doctrine or practice to those who were not (according to the divine laws and institutions of Christianity) subordinate to them.

A priori, before consulting the records of history, two cases are equally possible, and might each account for the actual state of things existing at the present day. The one is, that in the origin of Christianity, Rome was universally admitted to be the mistress of all other Churches, but that in later and more degenerate times, as heresies and schisms arose, a considerable number of other local Churches rebelled against her lawful and divine authority; the other, that our Lord and His Apostles gave the Church of Rome no supremacy over other Churches, but that that Church availed itself of its superior wealth and favourable situation at the ancient seat of empire, gradually to usurp a power which Christ never gave her, and that thus she was, by a gradual system of persevering encroachment, at last able to grasp at universal power over the whole Church, and practically for a considerable period to exercise it over a large part of it.

Which of these two theories is borne out by historical

Quibus auctoritatibus, vel quibus rationum firmiter utraque sententia satisfactoris et confessionis innitur, in medium breviter exposuimus. Cui autem harum potius adhaerendum sit, lectoris iudicio reservatur. Utraque enim fautores habet sapientes et religiosos viros.

Lectoris iudicio: Certissimum est, et pro certissimo habendum, peccati mortalis necessarium esse confessionem sacramentalem, eo modo ac tempore adhibitam, quo in concilio Tridentino post alia concilia est constitutum.